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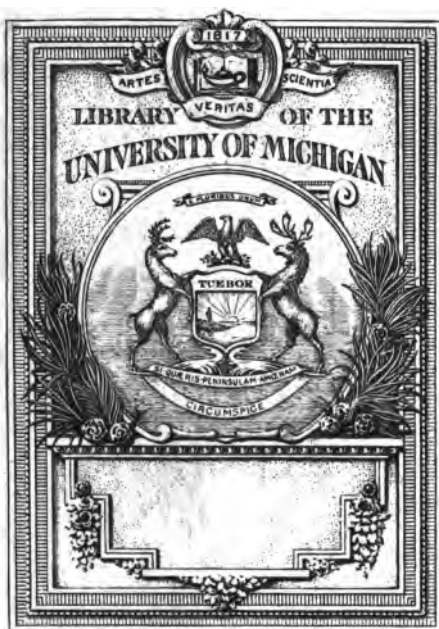
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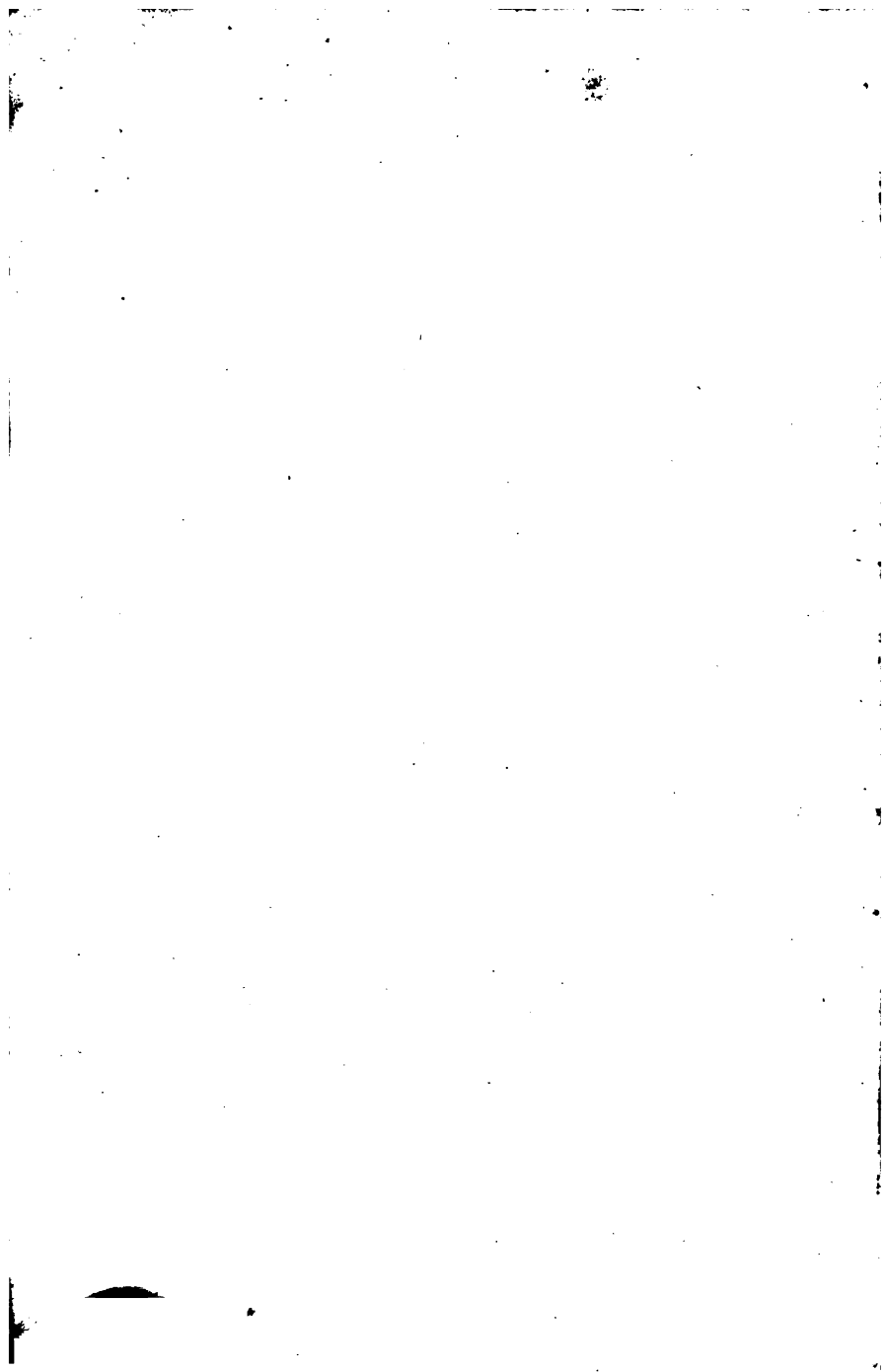
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THE
INSURRECTION.

OR, A

FAITHFUL NARRATIVE

OF THE

DISTURBANCES

WHICH LATELY BROKE OUT IN THE

Province of *Munster*,

UNDER THE DENOMINATION OF

WHITE OF RIGHT-BOYS.

The wonderful Year... Annus Mirabilis. SWIFT.

*Quibus
What Altars hath it spared?..... Peperit Aris?*

HOR. CAR. 35.

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T H E

INSURRECTION, &c.

HAD any eminent Historian of the Age undertaken to give the Public a faithful History of the kingdom of Ireland, from the early Æra of it's boasted antiquity to the present Day, distinguishing his work into Annals, he would scarcely have ventured on the Commencement of the Year 1786 without a Pause. Whatever extraordinary Events he might have recorded thro' the Progress of his work, yet while he beheld in silent Astonishment the Transactions he was now going to relate, he would have thought it necessary by some previous address to bespeak the indulgence of his Reader, and to appeal to something more than his cooler Judgment,

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to prevent a suspicion of his own Veracity, and secure Credit to his Narration. Such a Convulsion, I had almost said a Revolution, has taken place within the compass of a single Year, as is not to be paralleled in the history of Nations. Tho' the Facts are of Public Notoriety, yet are they of so singular a kind, that it is to be feared that many of them will be controverted even by our own Countrymen, who have not resided in or near the Districts where they happened; and to Foreigners the relation of them will carry the appearance of gross Exaggeration. It will not be admitted in this enlightened age, when the spirit of obedience to Law and Order has made such a progress in other Nations, that in a Country, where the blessings of public Peace have been enjoyed without interruption for near a Century past, where no foreign Enemy has made his appearance for so long a time, such a Spirit of Hostility should have suddenly broken forth, as setting at Defiance all the restraints of legal Authority, and casting off all reverence for Religion, bids fair for bringing about a Revolution, that, either in it's immediate or remoter Consequences, will work a total Change in our Religious and Civil Establishments. If the Insurgents should prevail,

prevail, our Ecclesiastical Establishment at least, so long a boasted part of our happy Constitution, must fall to the ground. And when one great Pillar of the Fabrick falls, let the other tremble! If they be suppressed, it is to be dreaded that, in order to rivet Shackles upon future Licentiousness, it will be thought necessary to impose such rigid restrictions by Authority of Law, as may infringe and bear hard upon the rights of Civil Freedom. In either case we shall have cause to rue the day, when either the barbarous ferocity of the *Irish* Peasantry, the supineness and connivance of the *Irish* Gentry, or the interested animosity of Faction, have caused or suffered such a fire to be kindled as must, in the progress of its fury, consume every thing that is essential to public or private happiness.

In the first rise and after-progress of the Insurrection, it exactly resembles the monster described by the Poet — *Parva metu primo, mox sese attollit in auras.* — “ From the humblest beginnings, it has risen to such a monstrous altitude of Iniquity as startles the imagination.” From creeping on the ground, it has soared into the regions of madness and folly beyond the limits of what the most
extravagant

extravagant fancy could have conceived. At first it was but as *midnight meteors*—bodies of unarmed Peasantry, ranging through the Country, and alarming the peaceable Inhabitants with unmeaning noise and riot, supposed to be the effects of their usual idleness and intoxication: But it soon assumed a more formidable aspect, and, *Comet like*, betrayed omens of portentous import, giving evident tokens that it had a deeper and darker purpose, that it was abetted and set forward by some potent Machinator of mischief, who working in secret, from his dark abode *shook Pestilence and War* against the peace and prosperity of his Country.

In the month of November 1785, we think it was, that this intestine *Crusade* commenced, and before the end of the year 1786, it has well nigh effected it's purpose. *Priests* and their *Altars* were the immediate Objects of its hostility, and the War has been carried on with all the inveterate rancour and animosity, usually incident to Religious contests. But at the same time it wears a colour of peculiarity, that distinguishes it from every other religious or anti-religious War, that was ever waged under the Banners of either the

Cross

Cross or the *Crescent*. True it is, that Religious dissensions have produced fatal convulsions in many Countries. Contending Bigots, of every persuasion whatsoever, have raged with more than human Animosity against each other; and to support their tenets and diffuse their doctrines, have not scrupled to wade through the blood of their opponents, and desolate their Country with fire and sword. Still they were the Champions of *some* Religion. While they raged to extirpate the Religion which they conceived to be false, they were equally zealous to establish that which they believed to be true. But never before the present day did it happen, that the Inhabitants of any Country rose up against Religion *itself*, wishing to root it out of the Land.* For if you chase away the Ministers of Religion, Religion herself must quickly follow. She will not stay behind her Priests and her Altars. She cannot exist without them. It was reserved for the singular Wickedness of modern Times, that Bands of ignorant Kearns should undertake to realize the Fable, as it were,

* Such was the terror spread by their movements, that many of the Clergy, justly alarmed for the safety of their Lives, fled from their flocks and habitations, and carried away their families into towns and other places of security.

and with *Gigantic* reshuess to carry on a War against Heaven itself. Even the zealous Roman Catholic, forgetting the Superstitious Veneration he so lately paid to the sacred character of his Priest, involves him in the common Ruin, and is ready without remorse to sacrifice him to the Dæmons of Discord and Sedition.

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Their mode of Warfare against the established Religion was first to depreciate the value of Tithes, which are appointed by Law for the Maintenance of the Clergy. For this purpose they assumed to themselves the Authority of imposing compulsory Oaths upon the Inhabitants of the several Parishes, that they would not pay more for Tithes, than such a price as would reduce them to the one half of their usual, and not one third of their real Value.* If the Clergyman should refuse to comply with these Terms and resolve to carry his Tithes, they were sworn not to assist or even work for him for hire. None but his own menial Servants were to be suffered to do the Work. Their compulsory

* To these rates the generality of the Clergy have been obliged to submit, and their incomes have been reduced in proportion.

Oaths were forced likewise upon many of the Clergy themselves, and some of those who refused to comply with the Imposition, were threatened with instant death, or inflictions of disgrace and torture that were worse than death. If Proofs were wanting to evince the unrelenting Cruelties that were practised upon all who were exposed to the brutal rage of the Insurgents, their several Modes of novel Punishments, which were inflicted upon many, betray such a merciless disposition, and argue such ingenuity in the invention of Tortures as would disgrace even the Nature of Savages.*

These Outrages against the properties and persons of the Established Clergy may be

* These were the white horse, burying alive, carding, &c. As many of our readers will probably be at a loss to comprehend the meaning of these terms, it is necessary to explain them. That of the white horse means a board stuck with large nails, their points upward, fastened upon a horse's back, the man placed naked upon this saddle, and driven for several miles in this painful situation. Burying alive explains itself. Carding was applying a wool-card to a man's naked body, till he bled at every pore, and was almost flea'd alive. Proctors and Tithefarmers, or any who were bold and honest enough to give informations before a Magistrate, were those who suffered from these vindictive barbarities. Those likewise who presumed to disobey the Orders of their Capt. Right, were sure to feel the Lash of their Severity.

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(seemed and were at first supposed) to be the effects of Bigotry and Superstition, (for the Insurgents were mostly of the Roman Catholic persuasion) and that they were instigated to them by their Priests. But their treatment of their own Clergy was, if possible, still more unjust and barbarous. Besides stripping them of the greater part of those Dues and voluntary Offerings, which had been usually paid them for the discharge of Religious Offices, they proceeded to inflict upon some of them the same personal Violences that have been related above. They drove them from their Altars, shut up their places of public Worship, and interdicted them from the exercise of their sacred Functions; depriving themselves in the paroxysm of their phrenzy of all the fancied benefits of even their own Superstition. This fact is alone sufficient to illustrate and verify the observation made at the beginning—that this Insurrection was *unique* in the History of Mankind, and that nothing like it, either in it's object or its means, has ever happened upon the face of the globe.

Beside these greater outrages and grosser acts of violence occasionally committed by these

these anti-religionists, their daily and nightly practices, which comparatively speaking may be stiled their lesser enormities, were yet such as, in less turbulent times and in a more civilized Country, would have been considered as such flagrant offences against the peace of Society as called loudly upon the Government to check and chastise. These were maiming of cattle, burning of corn and houses; marching and counter-marching through the country in military array by day and night, spreading such alarms on every side, that the few peaceable inhabitants lived in perpetual apprehensions, conscious that they held their lives and properties, but at the capricious will of a wild and licentious multitude. Their menacing letters likewise, demanding either an immediate junction with their Body, or contributions of money, horses, and ammunition, diffused the terror of their name into places where they made no personal appearance, and induced many otherwise well-disposed people to parade among them from the dread of exposing themselves to the effects of their resentment by a refusal. In their excursive expeditions they made no distinction. Rich and poor, high and low met with equal treatment at their hands. They surrounded

rounded the Mansion of the Lord of the Manor, if any such were deemed to be inimical to their projects, with the same menacing audacity, as they did the dwelling of the farmer or the cottager. As the commands of their redoubtable Captain Right met with more implicit obedience from them, than the Laws of the Land, and taught them to condemn their Authority, so his presence at their head relieved their minds from that awe and even servile reverence, which they once acknowledged and felt in the presence of their Landlords. Thus passed away the time of an whole summer, which exhibited scenes new in the memory of man. It was a rare phenomenon in a country that boasts the happiness of long-established Government and regular Legislation, that tumultuous bodies of men should be seen, traversing the fruitful plains in the spirit of devastation, like the wild beasts of the forest laying waste the fruits of industry, committing to the flames the dwellings and the hopes of the laborious husbandman without let or controul from any public authority. The forbearance and lenity of Government are doubtless to be attributed to note, but the purest motives;—the hope perhaps, that these disorders were but temporary

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rary and would subside of themselves, or might be suppressed without bloodshed. But such virtues were lost upon the obdurate hearts of these infatuated madmen. Even the after-interference of Government, though strenuous and judicious, has proved ineffectual. Its patience they construed into pusillanimity or approbation. Its authority they are determined to resist. Certain it is, the interposition of Government came too late to rescue the properties of the Clergy from the violating hands of these sacrilegious plunderers. The losses sustained will probably be felt by the present Incumbents, the opulent among them excepted, during their lives. Few estates can bear the subduction of an half year's rent. The severest oeconomy of their remaining days will scarcely be sufficient to restore the deficiency to themselves or their families.

When the advocates for these desperadoes (for to the reproach of our country, and the disgrace of human nature, they have their advocates among us) endeavour to mitigate the public indignation against them, by softening as they think the colours of their guilt, they eagerly maintain, that the only object of their rising was to plunder the Clergy, and

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to liberate themselves from the payment of Tithes and other dues, That is, (because they hold it to be a crime but of a venial nature) that they *only* meant to *qverturn the Religion* of their country, but had not any evil intentions against the *Civil Power*, or the *Temporal* authority of the State. How far this ingenious apology, though founded in truth, would avail to reduce the magnitude of their crime, how far they may be charged with a splecism in politicks, who assume in argument that a distinction may be made between the Civil and Religious Establishments of our Constitution, and that an attempt to destroy the one is not treason against the other, we shall not now stop to enquire. But the matter of fact, as it is alledged, we shall take leave to controvert; and in direct opposition to it, in the most unequivocal terms we do assert, that they have betrayed an equal Spirit of Hostility, and that they are at this moment, and their fathers have been in all former times, equally inimical, to the Civil Authority, as to the Ecclesiastical Establishment of this Country. Not to urge in direct proof of this, that the Insurgents are of the same fruitful Stock of Rebellion, from which the natural Enemy of this Empire annually recruits his forces; that they

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send a regular supply of traitors from among them, to fight the battles of our enemies, and draw their swords against their country; not to dwell upon their many declarations, rashly indeed uttered in the moments of triumph and intoxication, that they had strong assurances given them of a powerful foreign assistance; not to mention that in their soberer hours they have parcelled out the lands among them, reviving the claims of their ancestors, and pointing out the particular seats and districts, which they were persuaded they had now a favourable opportunity of wresting out of the hands of those, who had so long usurped them; not to dwell, we say, upon the satisfactory evidence that might be adduced from these considerations, we need only to advert to the many overt-acts of treason and rebellion against the Civil Power, which in the torrent of their depredations they have committed. The Civil Magistrate has been uniformly and strenuously opposed, whenever he attempted to put the laws in force against them. They have fought several pitched battles with him, and bade defiance to his authority as against the foreign enemy. They have broken open the public prisons and set at liberty all offenders against the

the laws that were found in them. They have threatened by secret assassination to take away the lives of such magistrates, as have been most active against them; and have been deterred from the deed, only by the unremitted vigilance with which he has stood upon his guard, or the danger there might be to their own safety in the attempt. The attempt has been actually made upon some, and defeated only by a spirited resistance, or what may be deemed the interposing protection of providence. If these be not acts of opposition to the Civil Power, if these be not acts of rebellion against the State, we confess we are at a loss in what terms to speak of them. There are no words in the language descriptive of their meaning.

If to all this we add the well-known Maxim, that bad men, once entered in the ways of violence, are ever tempted by success to rise in their pretensions far beyond their first projects of destruction,—prelling forward from every prosperous atchievement in villainy to the accomplishment of a greater — *magnitudine criminum quærentes salutem*. — “Hoping to “escape by the exorbitance of their crimes.” If, I say, we take this into the account, we shall

shall not hesitate to pronounce that, if a speedy check be not given to the Insurgents for the present, and effectual means be not taken by the Legislature to reduce them to the obedience of the laws for the future, we shall no longer be entitled to boast the happiness of living under a free Government, where life and property are secure, but may resign ourselves without resistance to the anarchy of a Mob-Government, where all distinction will be done away, and every thing that is valuable in the nation be trampled under foot.

After viewing the ravages committed by the storm, it is natural to ask, what could have occasioned it? From what point of the Compass those boisterous winds have blown, that have stirred up such a mighty tempest?—Here then we have to encounter a whole host of sophistry and falsehoods. The favourers of these disturbers of the public peace are not less ingenious in suggesting what they think to be a vindication of their crimes, than the offenders have been daring in committing them. All the florid tropes of declamatory eloquence are called in aid to work upon the passions of the public.—“The smoky crib—
“the tattered raiment—the naked offspring—

“ are artfully grouped, to exhibit a picture of
 “ misery to excite compassion — they are a
 “ poor and suffering people, who have been
 “ provoked to these acts of violence by the
 “ iron rod of oppression. — The Clergy and
 “ their tax-gatherers are the hard task-masters,
 “ that have reduced the people to poverty ;
 “ and they have only risen up in assertion of
 “ the rights of humanity, to shake off the
 “ heavy burdens under which they groaned.”

When such pains are taken, when such unwearied industry is exerted to delude the understandings of the public and confirm them in vulgar prejudices, it is high time to endeavour to undeceive them, and by the force of truth, if possible, to break the charm of delusion in which they are held and infatuated, as it were, by the power of falsehood and misrepresentation. For never were complaints of public grievances so loudly made, and with so little foundation in justice. When the real Causes of these tragical events shall be brought into open day from that cloud of concealment in which they are at present industriously involved, we doubt not but truth and justice will admit them, in rejection of whatever prejudice and falsehood may assert to the

the contrary. But we shall consider them both in their turns.

First, the imputed causes—namely “the avarice of the Clergy of the established Church, and the extortion of Tithe-farmers and others employed under them.” These charges, though so often repeated, though so confidently urged, though so familiarly taken for granted, we will be bold to say cannot be assigned as causes adequate to the magnitude of the insurrection, or sufficient to have provoked a deluded populace to carry their tumultuous proceedings to those excesses in which they have terminated. However the novelty of the assertion may startle those, who have lived in the habit of a contrary persuasion unsupported either by enquiry or evidence; however it may subject the Author of these pages to the imputation of partiality, we will venture to affirm that, in general, these Causes do not exist at all; and where in particular cases they may be found to prevail, they are in so slight a degree, that they can by no means be considered as competent to the mighty grievances complained of; nor are they fit to be urged in exculpation of those miscreants, who have so long disturbed the peace

of the community, and broken through all the laws of GOD and man to procure redress.

We wish to bring this matter to a clear and minute discussion. For on this hinge do the merits of the question turn. If the people be really oppressed, in GOD's name let every honest man raise his voice, and lift his arm for their relief. But let it first be shewn, *who* are the oppressors of the people. Let not the crimes of the guilty be visited upon the innocent. If it should appear, that the very men, who are most clamorous in sounding forth the grievances of the people, are themselves the authors of them——if it should appear that these very men have meanly fabricated fictitious charges against others, merely to shelter their own guilt, and basely arraigned the innocent for the thefts they have themselves committed, What indignation can sufficiently express our feelings? What punishment can be adequate to their crime? It is to be hoped that the day will come, when these dark incendiaries shall be dragged from their lurking places, and exposed to public shame. But this is beside our present purpose. We have only now to prove, that the grievances of the people, whether real or fictitious, do not originate from

from the quarter where they are charged. And this we do not despair of being able to make appear, to the satisfaction of every candid mind.

Whoever will draw a faithful portrait of the Clerical character in general among us, will hardly admit *avarice* to be a feature in the piece. It may be said of the priest, as well as of the poet—" *Vatis avarus non temerè est animus.*" The opposite folly would preserve a closer resemblance to the Original. Indolent and thriftless, they generally pass the first years of their lives in thoughtless ease about worldly concerns for the present, in humble hopes of some ample preferment at last falling to their lot. But alas! these hopes are not always answered. Indigence is seldom avaricious. It is the wealthy wretch, who turns miser and hoards his gold, from the pleasure he feels in contemplating the growing heap.—That the generality of the Clergy are poor, or at the utmost in a state of bare competency, is a melancholy truth. Those who go into the Church, as a profession and for bread, except by the force of rare abilities, or by some unusual accident, seldom arrive at any competent preferment 'till late in life. Many
such

such there are at this day, discharging the duties of a Curacy in extreme old age. Those again, who assume the Gown with better auspices, with great interest and powerful friends to serve them, live splendidly indeed, but are seldom known to descend to the sordid cares of avarice. As to the main body of the Clergy, who are possessed of the sufficient emoluments of their profession, what with that decent Hospitality which it is their duty to maintain, what with the support of their Families which are generally numerous, what with friendly bounties and Charities which they liberally dispense, they usually live up to nearly the full extent of their incomes, and do not always leave behind them more than a moderate subsistence for their widows and children; such as may exempt them from becoming pensioners to some of those charitable institutions, that are established for the support of the indigent relicts of the Clergy. *Avarice* as well as "*ambition*" should be made "of sterner stuff"—and can have no place in the bosoms of such men.

But there is one decisive argument behind, that proves beyond controversy that the oppression of the people cannot proceed from the

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the Clergyman; and that is, that he is himself the only oppressed and suffering man in the parish; for every man in it, from the highest to the lowest, lends an helping hand to make him so. First the *Great Man*—for there is a great man in every parish, or one who would fain be thought so. This respectable personage, who is the *dernier resort* of all parochial concerns, is seldom the friend of the Clergyman beyond the freedom and hospitality of his table. He first claims an exemption from Tithes for his own *demefne*, or pays such a trifle for it as is next to an exemption. His tenants must afterwards be favoured; and, in every altercated bargain left to his decision, he *gently* declares against the Incumbent.—The lesser Gentry, ambitious of emulating the Great Man by imitating his *moderation*, demand a proportional abatement.—Even the little *Country Smart*, who assumes the name of *Gentleman* in virtue of keeping a saddle-horse, wearing buckskin breeches, with a new pair of boots and spurs every year, thinks himself entitled to the like distinction; and if he has a tenant or two under him, recommends them for indulgence. If this be refused, he then assumes a lordly tone, and forbids his tenants to take their Tithes, or perhaps condescends

at last to hook them in at a trifling advance along with his own.—To the poor, who cannot pay, their Tithes must be remitted; and the knave, who will not pay, must be sued at expence.—If all and every of these exactions are not complied with, jealousies and heart-burnings, invidious reports and calumnies fly about the parish, and the Parson is execrated from one end to the other of it, 'till the poor man, worn out at length by vexatious insults and deductions, submits to make a sacrifice of a large portion of his property, to secure to himself the peaceable enjoyment of the remainder.—This is a true but doleful picture of the fate of every Clergyman, who is sent down from College into a distant country where he is neither known nor connected; and most of them stand in that predicament for some part of their lives at least. It is a truth of public notoriety that, instead of the tenth, which is their right by law, the Clergy in many places do not receive the twentieth of the produce of the land. Men so situated cannot, with any shadow of justice, be considered as the oppressors of the people. They are themselves the sufferers.

Secondly,

Secondly, let us now enquire into the justice of the next imputed cause of the Insurrection, namely, "the extortion of Tithe-farmers and "Proctors employed under the Clergy."—These two descriptions of men, tho' very different from each other, are in common discourse and opinion frequently confounded. Yet are they as opposite in their appointments, as the man to whom I let a lease of one Estate, and the man whom I employ as agent to let and receive the rents of another. To the former the Clergyman makes a demise of his Tithes for a certain number of years, or during incumbency, with whom he has nothing further to do, than to receive the regular payments according to agreement, and to keep him to punctuality. The other he employs merely in valuing the Tithes, and collecting the produce, while he holds the parish in his own hands. Now in this employment the man has frequent opportunities of defrauding his master, but none whatsoever of extorting upon the people. They may by small gratuities seduce him from his duty, and prevail on him to make false returns to the Clergyman, who has nothing to depend upon but the integrity of the man. In this case then the people have every advantage, if there be

any, of not being over-charged or extorted upon. We thought it necessary to say thus much, for the information of such of our readers as may be among those, who talk upon a subject, without knowing even the technical terms that belong to it. But to return to the charge that is made against Tithe-farmers:

The reader will perhaps be surprised to hear, that this charge will be found, upon enquiry, as utterly void of truth, as the former. These are a description of men, to whom the Clergy have been driven to have recourse, by the crafty and fraudulent dealings of their parishioners. Wearied out by the difficulty of dealing with men, whose sole object in making a bargain is to falsify, to deceive, and to defraud; disgusted by the frequent disappointments they experience from their want of punctuality in paying what they agree for; harrassed with the fatigue and expense of collecting small sums; they gladly embrace a proposal made by a solvent man, who farming their Tithes, tho' at a considerable discount, makes them they think sufficient amends, by the punctuality of his payments, and the competency of the sums he pays in at a time,

a time, for any allowances they are forced to make him. This man is generally a substantial Farmer of the neighbourhood, who by a knowledge of business, and a familiarity with the modes and manners of the people, is a match for them in their dealings; and by his personal influence among them is enabled to procure a much better price from them, than they would ever consent to pay to the Clergyman. It is at least well-known that they would pay with cheerfulness to the one what they would most grudgingly pay to the other. "He was one of themselves, and it was better he should have it than a stranger." This at least was their language before these disturbances broke out. Indeed it should seem that, in such a Country as this, it was an happy expedient to place such a man between the people and the priest; who might be able, by his intermediate position, to take off in some measure from the painful situation of both; to silence the envious murmurings of the one, and relieve the vexatious anxieties of the other, either in making bargains or enforcing payments; leaving the Clergyman at the same time disengaged and at leisure to attend solely to the duties of his profession and the care of religion. Now it is, methinks, rather too hastily inferred, that *merely* because this man deals in Tithes, he

therefore oppresses the people. In all his other dealings he maintains a fair and honest Character. In Tithes alone he is an extortioner. The Author of these sheets does not pretend to have had much intercourse with this order of men ; but some he has known, and they were men of as much probity and humanity as any of their line of life, or indeed of any rank whatsoever ; men from whose nature injustice and oppression were as abhorrent, as from the best in the community. They are in general men, whose industry, frugality and sobriety have enabled them to amass an ample competency for their station of life, which at once sets them above the temptation as well as the inclination to oppose or defraud. If any reliance can be had, if any confidence can be reposed in presumptive virtue, they should not be hastily refused to such a description of men. Many striking instances of the offences of individuals should be first adduced in proof, before a general imputation of criminality should be admitted against them. Be it remembered likewise, that no specific charges have been brought forward against any. All is surmise and general imputation.—Besides all this, it is not in the power of this man to oppress the people. He cannot take from them more than the tenth. But the grievance lies

here. He makes them *pay* that tenth. They cannot play the tricks of fraud and artifice with *him*, that they do with the Clergyman. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ!* Forcing them to do justice is, in their estimation, oppression and extortion. But admitting that some instances of the extortion of these men may be produced and testified; allowing that among the Clergy likewise *the love of filthy lucre* may be found to prevail in the breasts of some individuals over a sense of probity and humanity, (as in the variety of the human character, as in the imperfection of human nature perhaps it cannot be otherwise,) allowing we say for all this, Can these instances be supposed sufficient to have swelled the volume of grievances to such a bulk, as to have provoked an Insurrection of the people over so large a part of the Kingdom, and to justify the atrocity of their measures? Shall a few local grievances be made a pretext for universal out-cry? No. Had their complaints been better founded, had their grievances been more weighty and injurious, still there were many resources in the Laws, in the power of their Landlords, in the public Humanity, to which they might have appealed for redress, before they betook themselves to a remedy so much worse than the disease, as public violence and rebellion

lion against the laws of God and man. But in very fact they have no such apology to plead ; for they have no grievances to complain of. All that they have said, and written, and clamoured, and sworn upon the subject, is counterfeit and fictitious, the work of their own distracted imaginations, wisely indeed calculated for the purpose of colouring over their evil deeds, but without the smallest foundation in truth.

It is the usual policy of injustice to calumniate the Character, while it injures the man ; and in this policy these Rustic Statesmen have made a competent proficiency, and practised it with no small degree of success. They and their advocates have wielded the weapons of falshood with admirable dexterity, and are become as perfect adepts in the art of *political lying*, as if they had been trained within the mysterious circle of Court refinement and intrigue.—Witness the glaring falshoods, that daily disgrace our public prints. Witness the numerous lies, that hourly circulate through our towns and villages. Witness the private conversations of every table, where men sport their licentious sentiments with freedom, bandy their frivolous arguments, and blush not to avow themselves the champions of riot and violence,

violence, of barbarism and vice, of sedition and rebellion; and that often in a language that would disgrace the mouth of a Cataline or a Massaniello.

Having thus endeavoured to prove, we hope to the satisfaction of the reader, what were *not* the causes of this fatal insurrection, we shall now proceed to say what *were* the causes of it; to lay open those poisonous springs, from whence these bitter waters have issued to deluge the land. The Author of these pages confesses he enters upon this part of his task with reluctance. It is painful to him to rake into the sink of national depravity; nor would he wish to be thought a severe censor of the Age and Country he lives in. But impelled by a sense of duty, and founded he thinks in knowledge and the justice of the cause, he will proceed. The one justifies him to himself; the other will vindicate him to the world; as it thinks him right or wrong.

The first real cause then, which we assign of the public disturbances, is the almost universal corruption of morals among the common people of the province.—The Munster peasantry of Ireland are, unquestionably, the most uncivilized

uncivilized commonalty in Europe. The improvements that have made a progress in other places, have not reached them. They are centuries behind other countries; not to mention their idleness and drunkenness (which are national vices, and the true cause of all the poverty and real grievances of the kingdom). they have a species of barbarism peculiar to themselves, that not only distinguishes them from the inhabitants of other lands, but even from the rest of their own countrymen. They are ignorant even to a state of brutality; yet is not this ignorance accompanied by that plainness and simplicity of character, that is conspicuous through the ignorance of other peasantry. They possess a craftiness and cunning along with it, that you would expect to find only among men, that had been long hackneyed in the fordid corruptions of the busy world. They are as familiar with all the shrewd quirks and evasive turns of the law, by which a bad cause may be defended, as so many Newgate Solicitors; and in pecuniary matters their acuteness sharpened by their avidity, renders them a match for the subtlest Broker of the Alley. Unacquainted with the moral obligations of doing Justice and speaking Truth, they will cheat and lie, and confirm their

their falsehoods and vindicate their frauds by perjury, without the least remorse. To all this, they inherit a rashness of mind, or boldness of spirit, call it which you will, that prompts them to undertake the most hazardous enterprises, and hurries them on to the commission of the most enormous crimes, in which they stop not to exercise the most vindictive cruelty. Witness the inveteracy with which they fight their private quarrels, when the different Clans meet at fairs and markets to give a loose to their animosities in pitched battles. Even their places of Divine Worship on the Lord's Day are their frequent rendezvous of hostilities. Hence they become unamenable to the laws, and from the state of relaxation in which the country Magistrates have held the Execution of the Laws for many years past, they have lived in the habit of committing the most atrocious crimes with impunity.—To finish their character, Ingratitude is their reigning vice. They are not more impatient of injuries, than they are of benefits. They are not to be softened by acts of kindness. They deem a man a fool who confers them, and think they have a right to avail themselves of his weakness.—
“ data imputant, non acceptis obligantur.”

Whether we are to impute these depravities to that state of abject Slavery, the great Debaaser of the human mind, in which they were so long held by their Chieftains while the spirit of Clanſhip prevailed among them (indeed there is a great deal of it remaining to this day) or to the ſpirit of the Popiſh ſuperſtition, to which they have been long the groſſeſt Bigots, we ſhall not pretend to ſay. But ſuch are the people at this time, and doubtleſs they were the fitteſt inſtruments that could be choſen for working this mighty miſchief. The temptation, held out to their ſelf-interest, of exempting them from the payment of Tithes, made them embrace the cauſe with eagernels; and the mode of bringing about their Emancipation exactly fell in with their fierce and ſavage diſpoſitions. It could not have been effected by a leſs vicious or leſs abandoned People.

But notwithſtanding all this, it is not to be ſuppoſed that even *ſuch* a People could of *themſelves* have formed the deſperate project. They are too groſs in their conceptions, their minds are too confined and groveling to have riſen without aid to the lofty ambition of overturning a National Church. They had then, we muſt conclude, their Guides, their Teachers, their Directors. Here we cannot but pauſe and aſk
with

with astonishment, Who were *those Guides*, *those Teachers*, and *those Directors*? When we look around in search of them, we see none before us but men of Fortune, of Family, of fair Fame. Can we suppose that such men were the instigators of all this mischief? Can we imagine that such men could have harboured the infernal scheme of letting loose these wild beasts to worry and harass the venerable body of their fellow-subjects, to attack their persons with unmanly outrage, to invade their properties, and violate all that is held sacred among men? Can we persuade ourselves that Magistrates would look tamely on, and behold the most atrocious breaches of law and justice, without interposing their authority for the preservation of the peace and the protection of the innocent? Or must we submit our minds, though with reluctance, to the Evidence of Facts that irresistibly stare us in the face, and be compelled to acknowledge that the *Supineness* and *Connivance* of the Munster Gentry were another cause of this destructive Insurrection?

“ We do not, Gentlemen, presume to charge you *all* with a direct agency or personal activity in the plot. *Passive obedi-*

" *ence* and *non-resistance* is the crime that
 " most of you have to answer for. The
 " Birth of this distorted Brat may perhaps be
 " traced to the fecundity of a single brain,
 " and worthy the child is of the parent.
 " But that it has had many *nursing fathers*
 " *and nursing mothers* among you, is evident.
 " The torpid indifference of some, the cautious
 " timidity of many, the malicious connivance
 " of others, who, secure themselves from the
 " danger, sat still with careless apathy to
 " enjoy the Storm which threatened the lives
 " of others, not without a wishful eye to the
 " picking up of some rich venture from the
 " Wreck, are evident proofs of the Fact. If
 " besides all this, you have given strong in-
 " dications that you raised up to the deluded
 " minds of the populace this phantom of
 " fictitious grievances, merely to blind their
 " eyes, or turn them away from the quarter
 " where real ones were to be found, namely,
 " from the rack-rents and oppressive exactions
 " of unfeeling landlords—how will you abide
 " the vengeance of your Country? How will
 " you make your peace with Heaven or your-
 " selves? That you might have stifled this
 " Monster at its birth, or strangled it in its
 " cradle, is evident from the well-known
 powerful

“ powerful influence you maintain, for your
 “ own purposes, over your tenants and vas-
 “ sals. But [the opinion rises to certainty,
 “ when we advert to the noble stand that
 “ has been made by a few spirited individuals
 “ among you, who have been able to quell
 “ this blatant beast, even after it had grown
 “ to its full size and formidable strength.
 “ They have been able to stop its violence,
 “ not only within their own districts, but to
 “ hunt it at a distance likewise, and make it
 “ quake at the very sound of their names.
 “ If a handful of heroes have been found
 “ equal to this achievement, what might not
 “ an army of Munster Gentlemen have
 “ performed? But it is painful to pursue this
 “ strain any further. The hour is now come,
 “ when you will be compelled to do from
 “ the meanest of all motives, self-interest,
 “ what you could not be prevailed upon to
 “ do from a sense of honour, or religion, a
 “ love of justice or your Country. From
 “ the few capital convictions that could be
 “ procured at the late Provincial Assizes,
 “ arising from the duplicity of Witnesses
 “ and the partiality of Juries, it is found
 “ that the lesser punishments which the Law
 “ inflicts upon misdemeanors are insufficient
 “ to

“ to check the rebellious spirit of these
 “ hardened offenders. They have proceeded
 “ to the commission of still greater outrages
 “ than ever. They have thrown off the
 “ mask, and by several recent instances of
 “ their conduct have declared, that rents as
 “ well as Tithes are the objects of their
 “ rapacity. The mischief of your own de-
 “ vices, Gentlemen, has now fallen upon your
 “ heads. Like unskilful Conjurers, you have
 “ raised a Spirit that you cannot lay. The
 “ fire you had kindled under your neighbour’s
 “ roof has now spread its flames to your
 “ own dwellings. If this does not rouse you
 “ from your dream of security, your sleep
 “ may be everlasting, and you may never
 “ again awake to the sight of your houses,
 “ your families, or your possessions.”

An happy release might now be given to
 both the reader and the writer from travelling
 any further together over this barren ground
 of altercation and controversy, was it not
 necessary to say a few words upon the subject
 of *Tithes*, a subject so much talked of and so
 little understood.—After a lapse of near four-
 teen centuries, which have gone by since the
 first establishment of Tithes in Europe by
 the

the municipal Laws of the several Countries, as a mode of maintenance for the Ministers of Religion, and of more than twelve hundred years since their Establishment in this Kingdom, we are called upon to vindicate the equity and expediency of the measure. After so long a tenure the title is disputed, and we are gravely told that Tithes are a grievance to the Subject, and that a total abolition of them would be not only highly beneficial to the community at large, but materially promote the interests of Religion itself. One would think that the very Sound of the Proposition would be sufficient to betray the folly of it, and excite nothing in the mind of the hearer but neglect and ridicule. But since it is the capricious humour of this innovating age, not to rest satisfied with the practices of former times; since the rage for novelty, which they call reformation, has carried men to such lengths of cavil and objection, that they will not admit even the most self-evident truths without discussion, we shall endeavour to prove, (tho' the plainest truths are perhaps the most difficult to be proved) that Tithes are so far from being a grievance, that they are really an advantage to the Subject, and that any other mode by Commutation would not only

only not answer the purpose of supporting a National Church, but would be more burdensome to the public.

Tithes may be considered as partaking of the nature of all funds appropriated to the payment of public services. The discharge of the civil list, the pay of the army and navy, the salaries of Judges and officers of the revenue, the Revenues of the Church, are so many national expenditures for the maintenance of the State; nor can any one of them, provided the public service is performed, be deemed a grievance more than another. But Tithes have several advantages, in point of not being burdensome to the Subject, over the rest. All the others are paid immediately out of the public purse, that is, out of the pocket of every individual. Tithes are never paid out of any property either public or private. If they could ever be deemed a charge on the public, it was when they were first granted, when so much annual revenue was taken out of the public Stock, and made a free gift of to the Clergy, though not without a tacit stipulation for the performance of such and such public service. It was rather payment than a gift. But ever since that time, the
Revenues

Revenues of the Church have been a separate property, that hangs loose from the national stock, on which none have a demand, and the payment of them cannot be an injury to any. The lands have descended from age to age, and have passed from one proprietor to another by grant, by purchase or inheritance, liable to the payment of Tithes. The Sovereign could not grant them, for they are out of the power of the Crown. The purchaser could not claim them, for he had never bought them. The inheritor cannot claim them, for they were never in the possession of his ancestors. That part of the soil in which the Clergy have an interest is never bought, or sold, or rented to any man in alienation from the Church. Had Tithes never been granted, or were they now to be consolidated into the general property, no public advantage would accrue from it. The purchaser must make his bargains at an higher rate for the Fee-simple of the land; the tenant must pay an higher rent for his lease.

But perhaps there is a delusion of the senses, a *deceptio visus* in the case. Because Tithes may be paid in kind, and *visibly* taken out of the field, they are supposed to be so much deducted out of the fruits of industry; and because rents are paid in money, they are re-

moved from the suspicion of arising from the same source. This weakest of all delusions has, I doubt not, it's influence upon many who can *see* better than they can *think*. But surely that part of the land, out of which the occupier raises the tenth, does not require more of his industry, than the other nine parts, out of which he raises the rent, and the one is as much taken out of the fruits of industry as the other. He is equally bound likewise to the payment of both; unless he can prove that when he takes a farm, and agrees to pay rent for nine parts of the land, he stipulates at the same time for a right of applying the produce of the tenth to his own use. But in fact if he was not to pay it to the Clergyman, he must pay it to the landlord, as is evident when lands that are tithe-free are to be leased out. The circumstance of Immunity is never omitted in the Advertisement, but always inserted as notice for expectation of an higher rent; and the bargain is seldom concluded without an advance much beyond what the Tithe would amount to.

But Tithes have another advantage over all other funds appropriated to the payment of public services. The rest are liable to be increased,

creased, and are increased as the exigencies of the State require. Tithes are always the same. The fifth or eighth can never be demanded for the tenth, and the weight of them can never be increased upon the Subject.—All other imposts are not only taken immediately out of the public purse, but that likewise stands further pledged to make good their deficiencies. Tithes are self-productive, and never fail to answer the demand. They are a permanent and never-failing spring, that require no aid in supply of all the drains that are made upon them. They stand alone and inexhaustible. From the pliable ductility of their nature they accommodate themselves to every change of time and circumstance: They bear a varying proportion to the value of money and the price of commodities. They rise with scarcity, and sink with plenty. They may be said at once to bid defiance to all the ravages of plague and pestilence, of war and famine, and at the same time not to swell beyond due bounds by the overflowings of abundance, the high price making amends for the scarcity, and the cheapness of the market correcting the plenty.

But to silence complaint at once, and pluck up all pretence of grievance by the roots,
Tithes

Tithes are the incorporate estate of the Church, inheritable and unalienable, acknowledged by the common law, and confirmed by many subsequent statutes. They are coeval with the first planting of Christianity in the Island, and boast a claim of priority, in point of original seizin, and consequently of payment, to all other property whatsoever and however obtained. The Clergy are the oldest proprietors of land in the kingdom : Tithes are their estate, consisting of a Chieffy to which all the lands of the kingdom have been subject from time immemorial. From this estate of the Clergy many public advantages have at all times accrued, and do at this day subsist. Upon the tenants of this estate the rents are never raised. No more than the tenth can ever be demanded. They have likewise better bargains than the tenants of other lands ; for Tithes are never paid to their full value : Seldom more than the 15th or 20th sometimes not the 40th of the real produce of the lands, comes into the coffers of the Church. In allowance of time for payment likewise, the tenants of this estate enjoy an indulgence not granted to the tenants of any other estate in the kingdom. Instead of the punctual returns of rents, coming in with the regular return of quarter-day, as with the laity,

laity, one, two, three, sometimes four years elapse before arrears due to the Clergy are paid off. The Clergy are the most indulgent landlords in the kingdom.—All these advantages would cease and be lost to the tenantry, upon the abolition of Tithes. They would be transferred with much augmentation from the pockets of the tenants into those of their landlords, enriching the one at the expense of the other. Did then the tenants of this country know and consult their own interest, instead of being the deluded instruments of their greedy landlords in procuring the abolition of Tithes, they would be sanguine champions for their continuance and support.

F I N I S,